

The New Mexico Healthy Food Financing Fund

FAQ's

1. When do I need to submit my application?
Applications are due by 11:59pmMT on April 25, 2023.
2. When will awardees be announced?
Awardees will be announced on or by May 5, 2023. You will receive an email whether you have been declined or accepted.
3. How will I receive my award?
You will receive an agreement to complete and submit by May 12, 2023. Funds will then be sent to you via ACH or check by May 19, 2023.
4. When do I need to spend the award by?
You must spend the award by June 19, 2023.
5. When is my project report due?
You must submit a project report narrative and prove use of award funds by June 30, 2023. You will be sent requirements and instructions separately.
6. Can I apply if my organization is outside New Mexico?
All applicant organizations must be located in New Mexico.
7. How much will you be awarding to each applicant?
We will be awarding between 4-20 grants. Grant award amounts may be from \$20,000 and \$100,000. Budgets will be reviewed and may be adjusted for allowable costs and reasonable uses of funds. We ask that you include at least two alternate amounts as awards may be made up to the requested amount.
8. Who do I contact if I have questions about this grant?
You can email your questions to hfff@edd.nm.gov or call 505-819-8914. Please leave a voicemail. Someone will respond to your inquiry as soon as possible.
9. Who do I contact if I have questions about the Submittable grant platform?
<https://www.submittable.com/help/submitter/>
10. How will awardees be selected?
Complete applications submitted by eligible entities will be evaluated and

scored based on the criteria below. HFFF reviewers will base scores only on the information provided in the application. This is a competitive program, so eligible entities will receive scores based on the quality of the information provided. There are 65 total points available for the criteria, and 18 available additional points for the priority areas. Each application will be scored by two reviewers, and the scores will be averaged. All complete applications will be further evaluated by the HFFF Review Panel of internal and external experts (EFOD) who will determine a consensus ranking of applications that will take into account the application score, project type and geographic diversity. Budgets will be reviewed and may be adjusted for allowable costs and reasonable uses of funds.

SCORING RUBRIC:

1. Applicant Qualifications (0 to 10 points)

The application will be evaluated for the applicant's demonstrated ability to deliver the project described. Applications will be evaluated for the applicant and project team's track record and experience in food enterprise and/or food retail industry development and management, and/or food systems or food supply chain experience. More points will be given to points with relevant experience, relevant partners in the project team, and/or projects that will seek qualified services in order to carry out a successful project.

2. Stakeholder Involvement (0 to 10 Points)

Applicants will be awarded points for the extent to which they demonstrate involvement with community partners and other food value chain organizations.

3. Food Access Goals (0 to 15 Points)

Projects will be awarded points based on how strongly they align with purpose of the HFFF program: to improve New Mexicans' access to healthy food, to create and preserve quality jobs in the food industry, and to promote community connections through food-based businesses.

4. Project and/or Business Model (0 to 15 Points)

Projects will be evaluated for the strength of their proposed concept to improve food access. More points will be awarded for a clearly defined problem and proposed solutions, with projections supported by market analysis and/or community assessment. Additionally, projects will be awarded more points if the supplier or buyer relationships have been determined.

5. Measuring capacity (0 to 5 points)

Applications will be evaluated for the applicant's demonstrated commitment to post award survey and impact assessment and sharing learnings with EDD.

6. Budget and Timeline (0 to 10 points)

Applications, budgets, and budget narratives will be reviewed for completeness. More points will be given to timelines that demonstrate a reasonable likelihood to conclude within the program timeframe.

Priority Points

Priority will be given to projects that have the following attributes. Three (3) points will be awarded for each attribute.

- Projects that stimulate investment for food and agricultural operations that are owned by individuals who are from historically marginalized communities including communities of color, Tribal communities, under-served areas with low- and moderate-income populations, rural communities, urban food deserts, and veteran-, women-, and “socially disadvantaged-” owned businesses.
- Projects that stimulate investment in the food supply chain to increase access to food for historically marginalized communities including communities of color, Tribal communities, under-served areas with low- and moderate-income populations, rural communities, urban food deserts, and communities and populations served through the NM Grown program including children, elders, and families that are served through institutions such as schools, senior centers, early childcare facilities, and food banks.
- Projects that include workforce development/training and/or create or retain quality jobs in the food/agricultural supply chain.
- Projects that build capacity of small and mid-scale food and agricultural operations to access strengthened market channels, including direct to consumer, wholesale and institutional sales.
- Projects that build capacity in regional food supply chain networks for food safe storage/aggregation, distribution and transportation.
- Projects that include regenerative practices, including but not limited to water conservation, soil restoration, and/or investment in the ability of the project to produce food in culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable way.

11. Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible Entities

- Political subdivisions of the state,
- Indian nations, tribes and pueblos
- For-profit business enterprises (including a corporation, limited liability company, sole proprietor, public benefit corporation, social enterprise)
- Cooperatively owned businesses
- Tax-exempt nonprofit corporations
- Small farmers with gross cash farm income under \$250,000 are eligible (commercial and noncommercial farms).

All successful grantees are required to provide an IRS Form W-9.

Ineligible Entities

- Individuals are NOT eligible to apply.
- Restaurants that are that are primarily focused on the sale of prepared, hot foods in a restaurant or takeaway setting to consumers are NOT eligible to apply.
- Entities wishing to lend or regrant the funds are NOT eligible to apply.

12. What are eligible uses of award funds?

The FY 2023 New Mexico HFFF funds may be used in a variety of ways to support eligible projects. Grants will be made to eligible entities assist projects with a variety of aspects of project development, renovation, and/or expansion. Grants are designed to be one-time cash infusions into eligible projects. The following non-exhaustive list provides a guide:

1. Site acquisition and preparation;
2. Equipment, fleet, supplies and furnishings;
3. Associated and relevant infrastructure;
4. Working capital for first-time inventory and start-up costs;
5. Business process upgrades; and
6. Brand development and marketing.

13. What are eligible locations for projects?

Projects must be directed to Underserved Communities.

There is no minimum population size for the underserved community, nor prescriptive requirement to serve a particular size of geography within New Mexico.

Instead, projects must identify the location and/or nature of the Underserved Communities they seek to serve, and a reasonable approximation of the number of individuals who will benefit from the project.

Underserved Communities also include, for the purposes of the HFFF, those communities and populations served through the NM Grown program. These vulnerable populations include children, elders, and families that are served through institutions participating in NM Grown, such as schools, senior centers, early childcare facilities, and food banks.

Projects in underserved urban and rural areas are eligible.

14. What do you mean by "Culturally Preferred Foods"?

"Culturally preferred foods" describes safe and nutritious foods that meet the diverse tastes and needs of customers based on their cultural identity." For further information: <https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/food-service-guidelines/strategize-and-act/cultural-food-preferences.html#what>

15. What do you mean by “Healthy Food”?

"Healthy Food" means nutrient-dense, culturally appropriate, fresh food that is locally or regionally grown, when possible.

16. What do you mean by “Socially Disadvantaged”?

“Socially Disadvantaged” The USDA defines socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers (SDFRs) as those belonging to groups that have been subject to racial or ethnic prejudice. SDFRs include farmers who are Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian or Pacific Islander.